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AMERICAN NEUTRALITY

HOSTILE FOREIGN FEELING HELD BY THE PRESS TO JUSTIFY THE COURSE OF THE PRESIDENT

Poor President Wilson! "The most unpopular governmental head in the world," as Colonel George Harvey (the original Wilson man), just returned from London, plaintively declares.

Colonel Harvey particularly deplores the marked unpopularity of the President in London. Our German-American friends, who have been bombarding Mr. Wilson for pro-British leanings and jughandle neutrality, will have some difficulty in realizing that.

But the fact remains that the President has been the recipient of much abuse in the English press, ranging from the scurrility of the "yellows" to the more civilly phrased but effective intimations of recusancy, spinelessness and disposition to favor the Central Powers, on the part of the heavy respectables.

The *Daily News* thinks the Monroe Doctrine has gone by the board because of the President's nerveless complaisance to Germany:

"It is doubtful whether the Monroe Doctrine will ever be tenable again, experience having shown that the United States can no longer rely on political isolation founded on geographical detachment, which has largely lost its meaning. . . . If Germany were victorious in this war the United States' guaranties of the independence of the states of South America would not be worth the paper on which that doctrine is written."

The *Times* is of the same mind:

"The President has striven, and is still striving hard, with the full approbation of the masses of the people, to cling fast to the notion that the United States can continue to live its own life, uphold exalted ideals throughout the new world, and promote their realization in the old world without abandoning the splendid isolation she has so long enjoyed. The hard realities of the situation created by the war are beginning to show that the notion is no longer tenable with the firm assurance of even last year."

The *Standard* roars at the President for not plunging into the fray because of "the abominations wrought in the name of German kultur." So it goes—only much worse in certain sheets of the lesser sort, particularly a pictorial rag (a sort of vulgarized *Punch*) whose highly disrespectable name escapes us.

"He that is not for us is against us;" that is the general idea. Open partisanship, not detachment of mind and an honest effort at neutrality: that is clearly what is wanted. Of course, Col. Roosevelt's violent fulminations against President Wilson, and particularly his preposterous theory

that our Government was obligated to rush into the mêlée because of the violation of Belgian neutrality, are eagerly exploited.

President Wilson's supporters may reasonably claim that all this dissatisfaction on both sides with the quality of his neutrality is no bad evidence of the studied impartiality of his attitude. When the time comes for real peace talk (and the fact that the President has dispatched Colonel House on a second mission to take soundings is to our thinking about the most hopeful sign of the times), will President Wilson be acceptable to both sides as mediator? It will be a fair test of the real feeling abroad as to his disposition to be fair.—*Milwaukee Sentinel*.

Colonel Harvey of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* brings back from Europe the interesting news that President Wilson is, next to the Kaiser, the most unpopular governmental head in the world. There is no feeling against Americans as a whole, says this acute observer, but there is real bitterness against the Administration.

This probably was not pleasant reading for a governmental head upon his honeymoon, but can we look for foreigners to be less critical of our President than Americans themselves? It is characteristic of the average American to brush technicalities aside and do what seems right. His passion is to do substantial justice and to see it done regardless of the letter of the law. He does not split hairs or attach undue importance to precedents; and he resents nothing else so much as to see guilt crawl out to safety through a legal hole. He knows that it is infinitely more atrocious to kill men than to send cargoes of contraband to prize courts. His mind seizes the essential right and wrong of questions, and he is impatient with persons who lose sight of moral issues in their quibbling over less important things.

The course of President Wilson has not pleased the people. Even those who defend it and see excellences in him know, deep down in their hearts, that he does not measure up to the situation—that he is far from the ideal executive for a crisis like this. No act of his has made Americans prouder of their country. No policy of the Administration has quickened by a single beat a minute the blood in American veins. No utterances of the President, since it was discovered that their literary finish was the most significant thing about them, has wakened a responsive chord in American hearts.

This is not to say that President Wilson's countrymen are unappreciative of his worth, his estimable qualities, his efforts and his desire to do for the best. Men concede these and commend him for them; but beneath their approval is the feeling that he has temporized, has tinkered the situation, and is such by temperament and training that he could not do otherwise. A sentiment not always uttered but often, as we believe, among the unvoiced thoughts of men, is that if the nation's executive shall happily be able to tide the country over to a time when some American of heroic stature can grapple the momentous issues which confront us, he will have done the most and the best that can reasonably be expected of him.—*Rochester Post-Express*.

We know that America and America's Government are not popular in Europe; we know that we are cordially hated by both sides because of our neutrality. We know, too, that we should become very popular on either

side with which we might line up. As it is, we are regarded as mean, selfish bystanders and are given no credit whatsoever for the regret and sympathy that we feel for all the war-ridden peoples of the Old World. Thus we find in a Sydney (Australia) newspaper the following bit of doggerel:

"They may talk o' eagles screamin'
And the glory o' the Yank,
But of scrap he's never dreamin'
So it's only gol darn swank.
He guesses some each morning,
And he calculates at night;
He's something big at fawning,
When the dollars are in sight.
He's a cross-bred Dago Yankee,
A Noo Yark Port-a-gee,
Right smart and awful swanky
Since the old men spilled the tea.
But he ain't done no shootin'
Since the junkers drowned his kids,
And folks think 'e wants bootin'
Cos he held his hand for quids.
He's a gol darn,
He's a gol darn,
But 'e ain't what we call white.
He's a gol darn,
He's a gol darn,
He's a gol darn,
He's a gol darn Yankee skite."

No doubt we Americans, as a people, have our faults. We ourselves see these faults, see them quite clearly, but we are conscious likewise of being imbued with ideals and of possessing, in fair measure, human virtues.—*Milwaukee Journal*.

What Europe thinks of the United States may be important. But what we think of Europe is far more important. Europe is always in a state of either hating us or despising us. Occasionally a surface friendship is professed for the United States when our interests happen to run parallel to the interests of some European country or we are patronizingly permitted to do them favors; but there is no love for us over there, never has been and probably never will be. Nor is there any particular reason why there should be.

At the present time the cause for hatred is of infinite proportions. Blundering European statesmanship has plunged civilization into the greatest war of all history. American statesmanship has thus far succeeded in keeping us out of it without yielding any of our rights under international law. The belligerents are bleeding themselves to death. Future generations will be burdened with a load of debt that already staggers the human imagination. We are not bleeding to death. We are immensely rich and prosperous, and we are likely to be the commanding nation of the world after the European Powers have exhausted themselves in a war brought on by third-rate diplomacy. Naturally, feeling runs strongly against a

Government that thinks more about the welfare of the United States than it thinks about the interests of the countries that are at war.

In the circumstances we are unable to mingle our tears with those of Colonel Harvey or to lament the President's unpopularity in London. We should as soon think of lamenting his unpopularity with the Kaiser. The Declaration of Independence has never been repealed.—*New York World*.

Colonel George Harvey, who has been on a tour of observation in Europe, is back with the information that next to the Kaiser the most unpopular government head is President Wilson. We do not know whether he consulted the Armenians when he gathered the data for this judgment or not, but, leaving the Turk out of consideration, we have no difficulty in believing that Colonel Harvey can make a pretty good case for his opinion.

One does not need a journey in Europe to remind him that men fighting mad and supremely convinced of their own righteousness are likely to hold that all who are not for them are against them. Many Englishmen think that President Wilson ought to have turned the United States over to their aid, and in this they are encouraged by a no less distinguished American than Colonel Roosevelt. They regard the President's efforts to make England obey international law as a blow at the cause of human liberty and a favor to a "baby-killing" Kaiser. As Great Britain goes so go her Allies for similar reasons.

The Central Powers do not like the President, of course. He has not stopped the munition sales, he has opposed and balked their U-boat policy, he has sent Dumba, Von Papen and Boy-Ed home, and he is an Englishman heart and soul, according to all hyphenated patriots.

Of course, it would be better if the war-mad people in Europe would be calmly dispassionate in all things—but they won't. The next generation of Europeans may see these matters differently.—*St. Louis Republic*.

There seem to be a good many people who are disturbed, if not distressed, to discover that the United States of America is not just now very popular in European circles. There are many writers, among them Colonel Harvey, the able editor of the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, a gentleman who ought to be greatly missed by *Harper's Weekly*, who are at great pains to spread the news. But really the key to the situation was, quite unconsciously, given by Mr. Rudyard Kipling months ago in a story, the characters of which united in the toast: "Damnation to neutrality." . . . We think that our unhappy fellow countrymen may profitably ponder the advice of *Life*, a strong pro-ally paper: "We should not take it too hard that Europe is not pleased with us. Colonel Harvey would have Dr. Wilson go abroad instead of Colonel House to learn what the European atmosphere is, but that would not help matters. This country may not properly regulate its behavior by European feelings in war time." That feeling is just now a bit superheated. That is a fact that it would be well to keep in mind. It should also be remembered that neutrals never have been popular in belligerent circles. The real question is whether we should have refused to be neutral. That is a fair subject for discussion.—*Indianapolis News*.

Colonel Harvey's word on this subject requires no stretch of credulity. It is corroborated by numberless expressions from other sources. Not that

it would be any other way with any President we might have had. It is the inevitable fate of the leading neutral nation that all its acts should be interpreted by one belligerent as favoring the other. The only way to satisfy either side would be to join it in the war. The impossibility of satisfying both sides in this way is obvious. But there is a fact of practical significance in Colonel Harvey's report and others of similar tenor. It is a fact that the United States, as virtual winner of the war in which Europe has done the suffering, is to become inevitably the envy, if not the object of hatred and contempt, of all nations. We shall hold the purse strings of the world and shall be frequently alluded to as the Shylock of nations. Great wars have grown from beginnings less significant than such sentiments as these. Considering all factors in our present and future relations toward the world Powers, the conclusion cannot be escaped that we will serve ourselves and our posterity best by carrying our honors modestly and providing ourselves substantially against the event of attack.—*St. Paul Dispatch*.

There was a particularly sound observation in the latter part of Colonel Harvey's statement:

It has been intimated that what Britain needs to insure victory, the interviewer ventured, is a strong, dominating personality to dictate the conduct of the war.

"That is absurd," replied the Colonel. "There is no such personage in the world to-day. No Cromwells, no Napoleons. What applies to war also applies to science, literature and politics. There is no such outstanding personality alive. Therefore the military, economic and governmental affairs must continue to be administered by groups of able men. The Kaiser is the nearest approach to a dominating personality in this war. Not because he is a superman. He isn't. But simply because he is practically an absolute monarch, the head of the house of Hohenzollern, and he has achieved only pyrrhic victories."

The truth of this is so plain that it is a wonder there has been so much talk about "the big man" that is needed. Under modern conditions there is practically always a large division of authority and brains in connection with every large enterprise. In the making of modern war it is inevitable. We should stop talking in the terms of the past.—*Edmonton Journal*.

Colonel Harvey thought he was voicing a condemnation of the President. He was doing nothing of the sort. He was testifying to the fact that the President, above all things, has been true to the ideal of putting the interests of all of the people of his whole country before all other considerations. It would have been a lot of personal satisfaction, no doubt, for the President to have avenged himself for the slanders of the German press of this country by permitting himself to have been borne along with the wave of anti-Teutonic feeling that has been engendered. That he has not done so the attack of Colonel Harvey, the scathing comment of anti-Germans like Colonel Roosevelt, and the undoubted unpopularity of this Government in Great Britain, France and Russia testifies eloquently. And it is rather funny to see how eagerly the Republican press of the country is snatching at the words of Colonel Harvey. Four years ago not one of them would have admitted that the Colonel could have told the truth under oath.—*Muskegon Chronicle*.

We made no "attack"; we portrayed a condition.—EDITOR.

Colonel George Harvey, back from Europe, tells how much the folk over there dislike us. He refers particularly to the British who, he says, are more incensed at President Wilson than at the American people in general, but other of our citizens who have recently returned relate experiences showing that John Bull is more inclined to shake fists than hands across the sea. Our people traveling in other European countries report Americans equally unpopular wherever they go. Each belligerent nation seems to have the idea that our strict neutrality is assumed expressly in order to injure its cause. However, it is encouraging to know that one gleam of friendliness illumines, in contrast, the general gloom of hostility. The Belgians like us. Cardinal Mercier says so. Notwithstanding all we have done for them, as the cynic might say, they do not hate us.—*Pittsburgh Chronicle Telegram*.

George Washington was not merely unpopular; he was hated, despised and abused in both England and France. So was Thomas Jefferson. So, naturally enough, in varying degrees, were James Madison and James Monroe. Ulysses S. Grant and Grover Cleveland sat in the same historic company. Perhaps the calm, patient statesman whose endurance of hateful, unfair, dishonest attacks at home and abroad in the name of "patriotism" and "humanity" presents in history the closest parallel to the case of Woodrow Wilson, is Abraham Lincoln. Let Colonel Harvey, when he returns to London, examine the files of any British newspaper of Lincoln's day. He will find that what was said of the Great Emancipator bankrupted the vocabulary of vituperation. We are not sure that that will console him for the harsh words he has had to hear of another President who has held America first in his heart, and not England, nor Germany, nor any other nation; but it ought to.—*Rochester Herald*.

It is really the personal rather than the political neutrality of the President that disappoints Englishmen. They do not maintain that our national position has been improper, or that American sentiment as a whole is not strongly with the Entente. They appear to feel that Mr. Wilson is playing politics with the blockade problem, that he is a moral as well as a political cipher in the vast trial of democracy, and they resent their inability to count him on their side, while convinced that he is equally aloof from their Teuton enemies. What they would like in the White House is a more humanly responsive president, a man of less controlled emotions and personality. But Mr. Wilson is as the Lord made him. If it is true that Mr. Wilson's prospects of ever acting as mediator in the peacemaking have practically vanished, the fact constitutes a personal criticism of Mr. Wilson. We do not say that it is deserved, but it is possible to believe that it might have been avoided.—*Pawtucket Times*.

Colonel George Harvey, editor of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, is one of the most brilliant writers of the day. He possesses a singularly graphic style. In the January number of his magazine he begins a series of articles on his observations in England. It will be remembered that the day he recently landed from that country he made the wise remark that to have things right Mr. House should go to the White House and President Wilson should go abroad on a tour of observation. Now Mr. Harvey tells of various dinners and other conversations, of course, concerning the

great war, and it is mortifying to find how widely this country is disliked, the more discouraging since it is admitted that the great majority of Americans sympathize with the Allies. All this is highly interesting and informing. It should be read.—*Hartford Courant*.

Colonel Harvey's report that President Wilson is as unpopular in London as in Berlin or Vienna does not disconcert the *Fatherland* for a moment. "England dislikes him," it says, "because he has not as yet complied with the terms of Professor Usher's secret alliance." This discovery may go with Professor Muensterberg's important discovery that Colonel Roosevelt is at heart a pro-German, and the logical candidate for pro-Germans whose quest is for "anybody to beat Wilson." The same spirit was encountered by Colonel Harvey in England; if American voters are really convinced that both Britain and Germany find the President *persona non grata* they will, of course, make haste to find a man who is more in favor abroad.—*Springfield Republican*.

What, in such circumstances, is a man to do but look around to his own countrymen, all of whom, except certain Republican politicians who are seeking office of one kind or another, hyphenates who are swearing at him because he will not violate his country's neutrality, and a few captains of industry who are missing the subsidies they have hitherto been exacting from the people by way of a tariff tax, are pronouncing him to be a big American, courageous, wise and conscientiously sensitive to the well-being of his fellow Americans. Now if only the Austrians would say that Mr. Wilson is a Frenchman or a Russian the circle would be complete, and the President's Americanism would have to be admitted even by Mr. Roosevelt.—*Chattanooga Times*.

Having recently returned from the theatre of war, Colonel Harvey declares that in the opinion of the English people President Wilson is, next to the Kaiser, the most unpopular government head in the world. This opinion is doubtless shared by the people of the other belligerent powers—notably the Germans, who, instead of being appreciative, are supremely contemptuous of the patient endurance manifested by our Government in connection with the numerous and flagrant violations of international law on the high seas. Such is, always has been and always will be the feeling of high-spirited people toward a nation's executive who lacks the courage to maintain the honor and dignity of his country.—*West Jersey Press*.

When were we really loved in Europe? At the present time we are informed by cable that neither Austria nor England cares to be on unfriendly terms with us, though we have spoken pretty plainly to both of them. If any person other than Mr. Roosevelt were President we would in all probability have pursued just the same neutral policy that we have pursued since August 1, 1914, and which we will probably pursue no matter how long the war lasts or what political party is in power, caring little whether or not that policy pleases any country or all foreign countries—because a policy of strict neutrality is the only just policy. Colonel Harvey not only muses but also talks without "method."—*Providence News*.

The report by that discerning home-coming traveler, Colonel George Harvey, that he found President Wilson to be the most-hated man in England and

France, except the German Emperor, is only another demonstration that the President has had wonderful success in playing no favorites in the neutrality business. Hated in all the belligerent countries, and even by some of his own passionate countrymen, the President of the United States is still America's own. He is to be judged, also, by Americans, and not by Englishmen or Frenchmen or Germans, inasmuch as his policy is made in America for America, no less.—*Springfield Republican*.

Colonel Harvey gives good and sufficient reasons why President Wilson is hated abroad. He says: "The people of France and England believe they are fighting for the United States as well as for their own countries." Naturally, then, they do not want the United States to interfere with any of their plans for starving out Germany. They simply want to control the seas to serve their best and most belligerent interests. This has been the whole trouble—all of the warring countries have found it impossible to see how the United States should look at the war except through their eyes. The President has preferred to view the war through neutral eyes.—*Elizabeth Journal*.

Colonel Harvey was astounded at the bitterness which he found in England against the President of the United States, but he says it does not extend to the American people. So far as can be judged by the expression of German-Americans, Mr. Wilson has succeeded in arousing equal bitterness among the Germans. Some may argue that this is good proof of genuine neutrality. Switzerland, Holland and Spain, however, have preserved an even stricter neutrality than has the United States and have retained the general respect of both sides.—*Buffalo Express*.

It would be a miracle indeed if President Wilson could please any of the belligerents without siding with them, because it is natural under such circumstances for countries to feel that those who are not with them are against them. And President Wilson as the head of the United States Government of course catches most of the censure. But so long as he strives to protect American interests and keep us out of the maelstrom of war, no American should find fault.—*Long Branch Record*.

All this is indication of the penalty that must be paid by one who would be neutral. We wonder how far it will go. When the test comes next fall, will the American people, or enough of them, forget their own interests and place the interests of Germany or England above those of the United States? The bitter and unpatriotic attacks in the Senate are not very encouraging. When men who should know better question the sincerity and honesty of their own Government, what is to be expected of the masses?—*Sandusky Journal*.

Colonel Harvey and Colonel Richard Harding Davis and all the other newspaper colonels who are so deeply concerned about British and French opinion that their own judgment respecting our duty is formed in London and Paris are the most bitter in denunciation of the German-American whose offense is that his loyalty is formed in Berlin. They see, as he does, the duty of America through the blurred spectacles of foreign opinions. In railing at his hyphen they refuse to see the hyphen in themselves.—*Syracuse Post-Standard*.

When Allies and Teutons all protest that the United States is not "for them," it is evident that the United States is, as it has proclaimed it would be, neutral. And when all the belligerents are bitter against the United States for its strict neutrality, there is all the more reason why there should be no question of the solidarity of the American people. The observant Colonel Harvey has found in Europe most convincing reasons why every patriotic citizen of the United States should stand loyally by his Government.—*Hazleton Standard*.

Assuming that the distinguished editor speaks verity, his tidings scarcely suffice to alarm—or even to produce lowness of spirits. For even if Mr. Wilson is intensely unpopular in Great Britain, he is equally so in Germany; and hence we have a "stand off," as it were, which, if having any striking significance at all, shows that the President has played and is playing the neutrality game according to the rules. No more satisfying evidence of the fact that the Administration is hewing closely to the line of an absolutely impartial policy can well be furnished than that belligerents on both sides should rail at it.—*Lynchburg News*.

Colonel George Harvey returns from Europe to tell us that, with the exception of the German Emperor, President Wilson is the most unpopular governmental head in the world. It is a remarkable declaration, and we are in no position to deny its accuracy.

But suppose it is true.

The very fact itself and the circumstances that make it a fact, if it be a fact, constitute a compelling reason why every American citizen should stand by their President.—*Houston Post*.

Not until the world has reached the happy state when gunstocks are but kindling wood and man is friend to man, whether a fence or a sea divide them, will Europe—or large parts of Europe—stop hating the United States. For that matter, however, European nations hate each other. There is more good feeling between the American nations than there will ever be between the European countries as long as the present system obtains in Europe.—*Chattanooga News*.

Editor Colonel George Harvey has discovered that President Wilson is intensely unpopular in Europe. The time was when such an announcement would have added popularity at home. At any rate, this may be taken as evidence of absolute neutrality. Harvey excepts Germany from this statement, but he leaves the doubt whether Germany likes Wilson or whether Harvey is ignorant of Teutonic sentiment.—*St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

What Colonel Harvey reports as the case in Europe may be true, but we would despair of America if it could possibly be true as to any of her Presidents. A Democrat ought to agree with Republicans that even a Republican President is better than any foreign detractor, who neither approves our form of government nor regards the ablest man in it as a statesman.—*Wilmington Star*.

Because Mr. Wilson and his Administration have earnestly endeavored to observe the laws of neutrality and civilization, he is criticised and condemned by both sides among the warring nations of Europe. Time will demonstrate that he is undeniably right, and even those now rushing to

criticise him will be among the first to admit it when the heat of conflict has cooled their tempers and reason once more holds sway.—*Tifton Gazette*.

Colonel Harvey may not know a knock from a boost, but when he declares President Wilson the most unpopular government head among Europeans he pays him the high testimonial of attesting the genuine, simon-pure quality of his brand of neutrality, on which the President prides himself and about which he is most solicitous at this stage of the world mix-up.—*Knoxville Sentinel*.

If it be true, as Colonel George Harvey, editor of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW says, that on his recent tour abroad he found President Wilson the worst hated man in England and France except the Kaiser, more than ever Mr. Wilson is to be loved and admired for the enemies he has made. It's another convincing evidence that he has played the neutrality game fairly and squarely—has played no favorites.—*Richmond News-Leader*.

Colonel George Harvey returns from Europe and says that President Wilson is the most hated man in England and France, except the German Emperor. As the name of Wilson is not exactly popular in Germany and Austria, we may assume that the United States Government has been perfectly neutral.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

Colonel Harvey, on returning home from England, is reported to have said that the British don't like President Wilson. If that is true there is no love lost. The American people have no especial love for the British, but they want to be fair with them, as with all the belligerents.—*Middletown Argus*.

Colonel Harvey, who has been in England, thinks the President of the United States ought to know how unpopular he is with the government heads of Europe. As if Mr. Wilson were foolish enough to believe that keeping this country neutral is a thankful task.—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Colonel Harvey comes home bearing the sad news that nobody in Europe is pleased with President Wilson. The man seems to have committed the indiscretion of conducting these United States in the interests of these United States rather than in those of Europe.—*Hartford Times*.

Colonel Harvey says the British don't like President Wilson. The British don't love anybody very ardently, just now, whose engagements prevent alliance. Small blame to them, maybe, but no more to the President, as things stand.—*New York Evening Sun*.

It has often been difficult for some of our citizens to put America first. But that attitude is coming more and more to be the only test of loyalty, and no serious complaint will be made against the President while he continues to meet that test.—*Binghamton Press*.

Colonel George Harvey returns from Europe with the news that President Wilson, next to the Kaiser, is the most unpopular man in the world in London, but it is the American people that Mr. Wilson is trying to please, and not the British.—*Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*.

Colonel Harvey, just home from Europe, tells us that, next to the Kaiser, President Wilson is the most unpopular governmental head in the world. And yet all that he has contended for is principles of humanity and justice.—*Altoona Mirror*.

Colonel Harvey for some three years now has never been keen for dropping neat little tributes in President Wilson's path, but this surely looks like one.—*Columbia Record*.

Perhaps Colonel George Harvey is right, and the British do not like President Wilson; but if the President is losing any sleep nobody has heard of it.—*New York Morning Telegraph*.

Colonel Harvey reports that President Wilson is unpopular in England. He will probably run behind in every English precinct at the next election.—*Detroit News Tribune*.

Colonel Harvey found America in disfavor abroad. This is the price of real neutrality.—*Troy Record*.